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Route To:

Subject: Helicopter Rappel Training

To: Regional Foresters, Area Director

On May 22, 2007, the Chief announced that the Forest Service would proceed with several recommendations in the *Feasibility of Conducting a Competitive Sourcing Competition on Aviation Activities in the US Forest Service* study. The following feasibility study recommendation to consolidate and standardize rappel training is a critical step toward improving our rappel program:

3.14.1.2- Consolidate helicopter rappel training to one location in each Region in order to promote standardization and efficiency.

Consolidation of rappel training will reduce overall program costs including equipment, facilities, and other overhead expenses. Other benefits include standardization of equipment and procedures as well as providing a central location for collecting and disseminating new ideas and knowledge.

The national standard for rappel training and operations is the *Interagency Helicopter Rappel Guide (IHRG)*. The IHRG should be used by all Regions to ensure national program standardization. This document can be found at: <http://amd.nbc.gov/library/handbooks/ihrig.pdf>

Regions should begin planning for consolidated rappel training immediately to take advantage of these benefits. This recommendation should be completed prior to the 2008 fire season. Regions are encouraged to examine other efficiencies including consolidated rappel training between two or more adjacent Regions.

Regions should report their progress on measures taken to standardize and implement consolidated rappel training to Larry Brosnan, lbrosnan@fs.fed.us, NLT November 15, 2007.

/s/ James E. Hubbard

JAMES E. HUBBARD

Deputy Chief, State and Private Forestry

cc: pdl wo spf fam regional fire directors

